

logical restoration program. Once again, native species will be used to provide cover and food for birds and other wildlife in the area. Brown intends to use a donation from the Audubon Society and restoration funds to replace trees within the Hedge cut down by vandals during the winter. Montrose, with its new rough, unnown grassy dunes, thicker shrubbery in the hedge and nearby planting groups, now more than ever deserves its international reputation. Birders can expect to see every regularly occurring migrant from warblers to sparrows to owls to raptors. The habitat ranges from open Lake Michigan swells, to a protected inner harbor, to a woody orchard, to a scrubby hedge-row, to short grass moorland, to long grass dunes, to a sandy beach with plenty of organic flotsam.

Many species of gulls have been seen in the winter, including Mew, Iceland, California, Thayer's, and Great and Lesser Black-backed. The star floats in Montrose's inner harbor and the beach (when the winds are right) are a major collection point for migrating gulls in late winter and early spring. Many diving ducks and grebes use the harbor in winter and during migration. Spectacular vagrants recorded at Montrose include Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, Tri-colored Heron, Rock Wren, and Groove-billed Ani. Montrose hosted a Purple Sandpiper on its rocky seawalls one late fall day.

After bruising damage to lake retaining walls and adjacent parkland from heavy storm swells in early March, the Federal legislature is getting serious about funding \$125 million worth of repairs recommended by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. After the repair work, Chicago Park District staff will replant the areas right at the lake's edge, good news for migrant fall-out days. Landscape enhancements are also planned at Waveland and its Bird Sanctuary, at Foster Beach and the Foster

Meadows just west of the sands, at the Lincoln Park Conservatory, at the Fullerton entrance to Lake Shore Drive, and even the grassy strip between the bike path and Lake Shore Drive at North Avenue Beach.

## The Next Century

If all the grand schemes laid out above come to fruition, the 21st century birder will have far more bird-friendly habitat to scout within half



*The Snow Bunting is one of many migrants that stop at Montrose Beach during their journeys in fall and spring. Photo taken 8 Nov. 1993 by Kanae Hirabayashi.*

a mile from one of the nation's major flyways. The parks will provide much better respite from both the natural hazards migrant birds face on their north-south treks and the urban stress human lakefront dwellers contend with everyday. Hundreds of acres of parkland will be preserved for the whole city and the many birders from across the state and country who flock to Chicago's lakefront for warblers and waterfowl. The potential for brand new hotspots is tremendous as old factories are torn down and new migrant traps planted and nurtured.

But like everything in Chicago, such a process needs a public push and continued support to make it happen. Cities have a way of concen-

trating on immediate issues - crime, poverty, education, transportation, and commerce. Birds and their conservation usually don't make the city's priority list unless active birding citizens and environmentalists make noise and offer their talent and energy to shepherd park projects through the system.

Many of the Chicago birders you know are already in the trenches, working with the Chicago Park District to get these grand schemes off

the map and onto the ground. If you love lakefront birding, you might need to take up the challenge, too.

*Author's and Editor's Note: We encourage you to get involved with these exciting lakefront projects. For information about lakefront volunteer and activist activities, please call: Laura Ronneberg, Friends of the Parks, (312)922-3307; Julie Sacco, Openlands Project, (312) 427-4256; or Christine Williamson, Sierra Club, (312)935-8439. Also, look for birding guides on some of these lakeshore hot spots in future issues of Meadowlark.*

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